

Cupping and Plunging Techniques

Utilizing a cup or mini plunger can be an effective method to mobilize soft tissue and reduce pain. In the following examples, I demonstrate how a cup or mini plunger can be used to self-treat calf pain. These techniques could also be modified for use on other structures or areas where you're experiencing pain, muscle tightness or muscle restriction. If your symptoms begin to worsen when performing any of these techniques, please discontinue the exercise. *Do not perform these techniques without consulting your medical physician first if you have a known blood clotting disorder or you're taking blood thinning medications.*

Calf Self-Mobilization Using a Cup

Apply a lubricant to the area of pain or restriction. Typically, an oil-based lotion works best. I personally use Albolene Moisturizing Cleanser.

Place the cup over and/or near the area of pain or restriction.



Calf Self-Mobilization Using a Cup – Techniques

Technique 1: Perform small oscillations over high tone areas such as muscle spasms, where there is noted skin immobility, tender areas or trigger points. Perform for 1-2 minutes per calf.

Technique 2: Move the cup slowly across the painful area either parallel or perpendicular to the painful areas. Perform for 1-2 minutes per calf.



Calf Self-Mobilization Using a Mini Plunger

Apply a lubricant to the area of pain or restriction. Typically, an oil-based lotion works best. I personally use Albolene Moisturizing Cleanser.

Place the mini plunger over and/or near the area of pain or restriction.



Calf Self-Mobilization Using a Mini Plunger – Techniques

Technique 1: Perform small oscillations over high tone areas such as muscle spasms, where there is noted skin immobility, tender areas or trigger points. Perform for 1-2 minutes per calf.

Technique 2: Move the mini plunger slowly across the painful area either parallel or perpendicular to the painful areas. Perform for 1-2 minutes per calf.



Calf Active Mobilization using a Cup – Part 1

Place the cup over the area of pain or restriction. In this exercise, the starting position will be up on your tip toes (*shown in Part 2*). The important component is the slow lowering of your heels. The emphasis should be on the eccentric control. Eccentric means when the muscle lengthens.

Spend several seconds to lower down your heels. I typically advise 1 second up and 5 seconds down.

To increase your range of motion (ROM), perform the toe raises off the edge of a step.



Calf Active Mobilization using a Cup – Part 2

Start slowly as to not aggravate the painful area. *Discontinue this exercise if your pain worsens.*

Initially, perform on one location only. 10 repetitions at a time; up to 2 sets of 10 repetitions once per day. If you experience a positive response to the treatment and your pain level decreases, you may perform the technique on other locations. You may choose to perform several repetitions with the cup in one location, and then move it to another location.



Calf Active Mobilization using a Mini Plunger – Part 1

Place the mini plunger over the area of pain or restriction. In this exercise, the starting position will be up on your tip toes (*shown in Part 2*). The important component is the slow lowering of your heels. The emphasis should be on the eccentric control. Eccentric means when the muscle lengthens.

Spend several seconds to lower down your heels. I typically advise 1 second up and 5 seconds down.

To increase your range of motion (ROM), perform the toe raises off the edge of a step.



Calf Active Mobilization using a Mini Plunger – Part 2

Start slowly as to not aggravate the painful area. *Discontinue this exercise if your pain worsens.*

Initially, perform on one location only. 10 repetitions at a time; up to 2 sets of 10 repetitions once per day. If you experience a positive response to the treatment and your pain level decreases, you may perform the technique on other locations. You may choose to perform several repetitions with the cup in one location, and then move it to another location.



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